



NEWS RELEASE

WYOMING DISTRICT OFFICE

Release Date: April 27, 2006

Release Number: 07-17

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GAUKEL GROWN & GROUND National Winner Home-Based Business Champion of the Year 2007

Keeline – The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) has named Gaukel Grown & Ground, Kevin and Julie Gaukel of Keeline, Wyoming, the National Home-Based Business Champion of the Year 2007. They won the Region VIII Home-Based Business Champion Award which included competition from Montana, Utah, North and South Dakota, Colorado and Wyoming and continued to national competition to win this prestigious award. The Gaukels were presented with the overall National Championship Award for Home-Based Business at the Ronald Reagan International Trade Center in Washington, DC on April 23, 2007.

This award is presented to an individual/organization that has engaged in entrepreneurial training, policy development efforts, or financial or business planning specifically tailored for home-based businesses; has demonstrated interest in home-based business and has measurable accomplishments in advancing home-based businesses, such as adoption of public policy or expansion of a program.

The Gaukel family has been farming and ranching in the Keeline area since 1914. Kevin and Julie are fourth generation farmer and ranchers. The possibility of seeking off-farm employment was becoming a stronger reality each day. They realized they had to come up with a plan to utilize the land already at capacity. So with two young children and their third on the way, the Gaukels began their value added, home-based business *Gaukel Grown & Ground*, and a company specializing in all natural, stone ground, whole wheat products was pioneered.

When they began their business, bread machines were becoming very popular, so Kevin created recipes for bread mixes using the hard red winter wheat crop the family harvested. In December 1988, the Gaukels conducted a test market at a local Christmas Bazaar offering three different kinds of whole wheat breads. By noon they were sold out and taking orders and decided they must be onto something! Today they offer eight products: Whole Wheat Bread, Wheat-n-Raisin Bread, Italian Herb Bread, Multi-Grain Bread, Muffin Mix, Pancake Mix, Cracked Cereal and Stone Ground Flour. They like to advertise that their products come straight from their Wyoming wheat field to customers.

The company focuses on educating America's youth while providing quality products to their customers. Each year the Gaukels host tours of their ranch for elementary school students. They turn their ranch into a "living classroom" with sessions focusing on sustainable agriculture, conservation of the land and resources and urban/rural partnerships.

With help from Leonard Holler of the Small Business Development Center, the Gaukels were able to expand their business into a very profitable operation. In the end says Kevin, "...the cows are

still what pay the bills...”, the whole grain wheat products are a hobby which is strictly to generate more growth within their main business.

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For more information about SBA’s programs for small businesses, call 307-261-6500 or TDY 307-261-6527 or visit the SBA’s extensive Web site at www.sba.gov/wy.

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